

away at Bolivia's democratic foundations in order to remain in power. In 2013, the constitutional court allowed him to run for a third term, stating that his first term didn't count—do-over, mulligan—because it occurred before the 2009 constitution took effect. What a farce.

This was obviously a cynical, political ploy, and should have served as the harbinger of worse things to come for Bolivia, and indeed it was, not to mention the ruling falls outside of the court's mandate to interpret and evaluate compliance with the constitution.

Responsible nations in our hemisphere, Mr. Speaker, must not remain silent, nor should this esteemed body. We must speak out in the support of the people of Bolivia to democratically elect their next leader.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Bolivian people before there is another crisis of democracy right in our hemisphere.

#### RETIREMENT OF DEAN OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, a few minutes ago, in Detroit, the dean of the United States Congress offered his retirement immediately. He has asked me, a member of the Judiciary Committee, to offer his words to his colleagues and to put his statement in the RECORD that indicates that he has notified Speaker RYAN, Leader PELOSI, and Governor Snyder of his retirement from the United States House of Representatives.

It is important to note, as I begin, that there is no difference or no undermining of the rights of women and the abhorrence of sexual harassment and sexual assault. But this is a statement that I believe should be read on behalf of the dean of the United States Congress, Mr. JOHN CONYERS.

□ 1100

As a Member of Congress, I have known Mr. CONYERS to not shy away from a legislative challenge. In addition to being the first Member to introduce the Martin Luther King holiday bill, he was the first to hold hearings on police misconduct, the first to examine the problem of solitary confinement, the first to offer racial profiling legislation, the first to introduce legislation protecting against disenfranchisement of ex-felons, and the first to pursue legislation protecting Black farmers from discrimination, among many other civil rights measures.

In 2007, Representative CONYERS stood up for the prerogatives of the House of Representatives and successfully brought a suit against the former President Bush White House for failing to comply with subpoenas relating to a U.S. attorney's investigation.

He has been the chairman of the Judiciary Committee; and he will con-

tinue to, in his life, as he has indicated, stand for what is right.

It is now my privilege to read this statement from Mr. JOHN CONYERS. I reiterate that he says that he notified Speaker RYAN, Leader PELOSI, and Governor Snyder of his retirement from the United States House of Representatives.

It was his honor—these are his words—and his privilege to serve the constituents of Detroit, Michigan, as their United States Congressman in the 13th and 14th Congressional District for 53 years.

This is his statement again:

I came to Congress in 1964. Since then, I have devoted my entire career to improving the lives of my constituents in Detroit and on the behalf of justice everywhere. These years witnessed a profound evolution in civil rights, led by millions in the streets who marched for justice and people of conscience in the Congress—both Democrats and Republicans—who heard them and enacted the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, and other landmark reforms. I have been in the forefront of the civil rights movement. I have been a champion of justice for the oppressed and the disenfranchised. I never wavered in my commitment to justice and democracy.

I am proud to have been part of that rich history. I have been privileged to be a founder of the Congressional Black Caucus and to represent the United States Congress by being dean.

I passed, as indicated, the law dealing with the Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Act, the Violence Against Women Act, the Hate Crimes Act, the USA Freedom Act, and the extension of the Voting Rights Act. I have led the fight against mandatory minimum sentences, hoping to reverse the devastating incarceration rates for African Americans and poor people. I have tried to pass a universal healthcare law, H.R. 676. Every Congress since 1989, I have introduced H.R. 40 to study reparations for slavery, and I deeply appreciate those handful of courageous colleagues who have joined me.

For Detroiters, I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish to bring hundreds of millions of dollars in critical grants and Federal funding for southeast Michigan to revitalize our great city, attract rich talent, and return to us prosperity.

I recognize that in this present environment, due process will not be afforded to me. I was taught by a great woman, my mother, to honor women. The first employee I ever hired was Mrs. Rosa Parks, who worked in my office for 22 years. It has been my great honor to work alongside some of the most talented and honorable staff on Capitol Hill and in Detroit.

I have stated my position on these allegations. I have worked with both women and men.

Given the totality of the circumstance of not being afforded the right of due process in conjunction with my current health condition, and to preserve my legacy and good name, I am retiring.

I hope that my retirement will be viewed in the larger perspective of my record of service, and as I enter a new chapter, I pledge to continue my commitment to a progressive vision and a better future for this country that I love. I owe that to the legacy of my father, John Conyers, Sr., who integrated labor unions in this country; to my brother Nathan, who integrated business, and he is my "main man;" and to my loving wife, Monica; and to my son, John III, who I

believe offers hope to this generation of leadership, and who is committed to being an advocate of fairness and justice for all; and to Carl Edward, who never leaves my side.

I cannot allow the great work of this body to be distracted from the important work, or the goals of the Democratic Party to be distracted. It has been an honor and a privilege of my life to represent the people of Michigan in the House of Representatives, but that responsibility will now fall to my colleagues and my successor. They have my deepest support and prayers. Jobs, justice, and peace.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 4 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Once again we come to ask wisdom, patience, peace, and understanding for the Members of this people's House.

Give them the generosity of heart and the courage of true leadership to work toward a common solution to the many issues facing our Nation.

As true statesmen and women, may they find the fortitude to make judgments that benefit all Americans in their time of need.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal. The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD) come forward

and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HURD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

#### HONORING THE LATE CHIEF JUSTICE EARNEST A. FINNEY, JR.

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, sadly, South Carolina lost a trailblazer with the death, Sunday, of Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney, Jr.

Justice Finney started his storied career in public service as an educator and then went on to become a renowned civil rights attorney and was South Carolina's first African-American chief justice since Reconstruction.

My first judicial commitment as a State senator was for Justice Finney, after meeting him with former Congressman John Napier, who had been my classmate in law school.

A graduate of Claflin University and South Carolina State University School of Law, the justice was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in 1972. As a member of the house, he made history as a founder of the Legislative Black Caucus. He served as the first caucus chairman.

In 1976, the justice was elected the first African-American circuit court judge. In 1985, he became the State's first African-American supreme court justice since Reconstruction. Justice Finney became chief justice in 1994.

South Carolina is grateful for the life and service of Justice Finney. We lift up his family and friends in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

#### OPEN ENROLLMENT

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remind every American that the window to purchase health insurance on [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) will close in 10 days. I encourage anyone who doesn't get insurance through a job or government program to apply before December 15.

Financial assistance is available, and the Department of Health and Human Services has said before that 8 out of 10 consumers qualify for a plan that costs less than \$75 a month.

Although the sign-up period was cut in half by the Trump administration, nearly 2.8 million people have already enrolled so far this year compared to 2.1 million this time last year. That is an increase of 33 percent, and this doesn't include numbers from States that have their own exchange.

Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is still the law of the land, and I urge my Republican colleagues not to harm the ACA by including provisions in the tax bill and, instead, work with Democrats to improve the law.

Millions of Americans depend on us to do the right thing, Mr. Speaker.

#### WORLD SOIL DAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on World Soil Day to highlight the importance of soil quality for our food security, healthy ecosystems, and overall well-being.

As vice chair of the House Agriculture Committee and chairman of the Nutrition Subcommittee, I know firsthand the importance of good management practices to keep this essential resource healthy.

This year's theme is "caring for the planet starts from the ground." Globally, 815 million people are food insecure and 2 billion people are nutritionally insecure, but we can mitigate this through soil health.

Mr. Speaker, 95 percent of our food comes from soil. Soil is a finite resource, and on a human scale, it is non-renewable. However, despite the essential role that soil plays in human livelihood, there is a worldwide increase in the degradation of soil resources due to inappropriate management practices, population pressure driving unsustainable intensification, and inadequate governance over this essential resource.

World Soil Day 2017 aims to raise awareness of the importance of sustaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being by addressing the increasing challenges in soil management. Today we encourage people around the world to engage in proactively improving soil health.

Happy World Soil Day.

#### BIRTH CONTROL RULE

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today against the Trump administration rule allowing corporations to decide whether their employees can access birth control. This morning, 500,000 comments were delivered in opposition to this rule.

It is astonishing to me that we are having this debate in 2017: women's access to birth control.

Birth control is not healthcare alone. It is the right of women to control

their own bodies, plan their own families, and chart their own futures.

Obstetricians and gynecologists from Chicago submitted a comment, saying: "Women who are able to control when and how they become pregnant are able to finish school, pursue graduate degrees, and further the greater social and economic good of our Nation."

Mr. Speaker, for 99 percent of women of reproductive age, birth control is an essential part of their lives. This is a direct attack on women, and we will not stand for it. Women in America are watching.

#### TEXAS OFFICER DOWN: SAN MARCOS POLICE OFFICER KENNETH COPELAND

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon, 58-year-old San Marcos, Texas, Police Officer Kenneth Copeland was shot in an ambush-style attack while he was serving an arrest warrant for a violent crime.

The 19-year veteran of the force was working on his day off doing what he loved: protecting and serving the community. This wasn't unusual for Officer Copeland. A father of four, he worked just about every day simply to provide for his family and help the shorthanded department out.

As guns blazed around them, fellow officers sprang into action loading Copeland into a patrol car and rushed him to the hospital with their sirens blazing. But it was too late. Another member of the thin blue line murdered simply because he wore the badge.

Mr. Speaker, this is the sixth peace officer in Texas murdered this year, the first in San Marcos history. We must do everything in our power to stand by our men and women in uniform who wear the badge. Peace officers like Copeland are the last strand of wire in the fence between the law and the outlaws.

We mourn his sacrifice, but we thank the good Lord that such a man as Officer Copeland ever lived.

And that is just the way it is.

#### WELCOMING USS "LITTLE ROCK" TO BUFFALO, NEW YORK

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and welcome the newly constructed naval ship, the USS *Little Rock*, to my home city of Buffalo, New York, where it will be docked until its formal commissioning on December 16.

For the first time in the history of the United States Navy, the commissioning of the new USS *Little Rock* will take place alongside the original USS *Little Rock*, which served during the Second World War and for the last 40 years has stood tall as an honored exhibit at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park.